

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1. (Currently amended) A sealing member for use in a pipe coupling assembly ~~of the type, said sealing member being adapted to engage an end of a pipe having an exposed metal surface, said sealing member characterised by comprising a pipe receiving portion adapted to sealably receive [[the]] said end of [[the]] said pipe to thereby prevent contact of [[the]] said exposed metal surface with liquid travelling through [[the]] said pipe.~~

Claim 2. (Currently amended) [[A]] The sealing member [[as in]] of claim 1, wherein said sealing member further includes an o-ring portion that is adapted to provide a seal between [[the]] said pipe and [[the]] said pipe coupling assembly.

Claim 3. (Currently amended) [[A]] The sealing member ~~as in claim 1 or of~~ claim 2, wherein [[the]] said sealing member is integrally formed and adapted to be positioned within [[the]] said pipe coupling assembly, ~~so that the whereby said~~ pipe receiving portion is located in a position rearwards of [[the]] said o-ring portion, [[the]] said pipe receiving portion and o-ring portion being joined by an annular wall of predetermined longitudinal length.

Claim 4. (Currently amended) [[A]] The sealing member [[as in]] of claim 3, wherein [[the]] said o-ring portion extends substantially outwardly from [[the]] said annular wall and said pipe receiving portion extends substantially inwardly from [[the]] said annular wall.

Claim 5. (Currently amended) [[A]] The sealing member ~~as in any one of the above claims of claim 1,~~ wherein [[the]] said pipe receiving portion is in the form of an annular channel including a base surface which extends inwardly from [[the]] said annular wall substantially perpendicularly to the longitudinal axis of [[the]] said coupling, said base surface adapted to abut with [[the]] said exposed metal surface of [[the]] said pipe end when [[the]] said pipe is fully received within [[the]] said pipe receiving portion.

Claim 6. (Currently amended) [[A]] The sealing member [[as in]] of claim 5, wherein [[the]] said pipe receiving portion further includes an internal wall defining a central bore of [[the]] said sealing member, said internal wall extending forwardly from the internal edge of [[the]] said base surface [[so that]], whereby when [[the]] said pipe end is fully received within [[the]] said pipe receiving portion, [[the]] said internal wall lines [[the]] said internal edge of [[the]] said pipe end.

Claim 7. (Currently amended) [[A]] The sealing member as in any one of the above of claim 5 or claim 6, wherein when [[the]] said pipe end is fully received within [[the]] said pipe receiving portion of [[the]] said sealing member, [[the]] said base surface and internal wall of [[the]] said pipe receiving portion serve to prevent contact of liquid travelling through [[the]] said central bore of [[the]] said sealing member with [[the]] said exposed metal surface of [[the]] said pipe end.

Claim 8. (Currently amended) [[A]] The sealing member as in any one of the above claims of claim 1, wherein [[the]] said member includes a rearward end that is substantially cylindrical and includes a plurality of tetrahedrally shaped grooves disposed radially thereabout.

Claim 9. (Currently amended) A pipe coupling assembly for connection of a pipe having an end with exposed metal, said pipe coupling assembly including comprising:
a hollow body having an external thread extending at least in part therealong;
a nut threadably engaging said body external thread;
a sealing member including a pipe receiving portion; and
a deformable gripping member, wherein upon tightening of said nut, a force is exerted on [[the]] said gripping member both in the longitudinal and radial directions to thereby cause [[the]] said gripping member to engage [[the]] said pipe and drag it into [[the]] said body so that the, whereby said end of [[the]] said pipe is received within [[the]] said pipe receiving portion of [[the]] said sealing member.

Claim 10. (Currently amended) [[A]] The pipe coupling assembly [[as in]] of claim 9, wherein [[the]] said hollow body includes an inner surface and a gripping member abutment surface disposed rearwardly from [[the]] said inner surface.

Claim 11. (Currently amended) [[A]] The pipe coupling assembly [[as in]] of claim 9 or claim 10, wherein [[the]] said sealing member further includes an o-ring portion adapted to sit between [[the]] said gripping member abutment surface and [[the]] said gripping member, said o-ring portion adapted to compress when said longitudinal force is applied to [[the]] said gripping member.

Claim 12. (Currently amended) [[A]] The pipe coupling assembly [[as in]] of claim 11, wherein [[the]] said sealing member is an integrally formed structure, whereby [[the]] said pipe receiving portion is disposed rearwardly from [[the]] said o-ring portion and joined by an annular wall of predetermined length.

Claim 13. (Currently amended) [[A]] The pipe coupling assembly as in any one of claims 9-12 of claim 9, wherein [[the]] said pipe receiving portion is in the form of an annular channel including a base surface which extends inwardly from [[the]] said annular wall substantially perpendicularly to the longitudinal axis of the coupling, said base surface adapted to abut with [[the]] said exposed metal surface of [[the]] said pipe end when [[the]] said pipe is fully received within [[the]] said pipe receiving portion.

Claim 14. (Currently amended) [[A]] The pipe coupling assembly as in any one of claims 9-13 of claim 9, wherein [[the]] said pipe receiving portion further includes an internal wall defining a central bore of [[the]] said sealing member, said internal wall extending forwardly from the internal edge of [[the]] said base surface so that, whereby when [[the]] said pipe end is fully received within [[the]] said pipe receiving portion, [[the]] said internal wall lines [[the]] said internal edge of [[the]] said pipe end.

Claim 15. (Currently amended) [[A]] The pipe coupling assembly as in any one of claims 9-14 of claim 9, wherein [[the]] said nut includes at one end an internal thread co-operable with said body external thread and including a hooked projection adapted to extend over at least part of said body inner surface, said projection including a first inner surface generally parallel to said body inner surface, a second outwardly converging surface extending from the inner edge of said inner surface.

Claim 16. (Currently amended) [[A]] The pipe coupling assembly as in any one of claims 9-15 of claim 9, wherein [[the]] said deformable gripping member includes a first surface generally parallel to said body inner surface and having a second outwardly converging outer surface extending from said first surface, said gripping member including radially inward barbs.

Claim 17. (Currently amended) [[A]] The pipe coupling assembly as in any one of claims 9-16 of claim 9, wherein [[the]] said gripping member moves sufficiently radially inwardly that [[the]] said gripping member second surface is caused to slide inwardly against [[the]] said nut second surface until in a fixed position at which time [[the]] said body reinforces [[the]] said nut against any radial force.

Claim 18. (Currently amended) [[A]] The pipe coupling assembly as in any one of claims 9-17 of claim 9, wherein [[the]] said gripping member [[may be]] is in the form of a collet that is split.

Claim 19. (Currently amended) [[A]] The pipe coupling assembly as in any one of claims 9-18 of claim 9, wherein the slope of [[the]] said gripping member second surface is smaller than the slope of [[the]] said nut second surface and is selected so that when [[the]] said nut engages [[the]] said gripping member and forces it into [[the]] said body thereby compressing it, [[the]] said slope of [[the]] said gripping member second surface is generally the same as [[the]] said nut second surface.

Claim 20. (Currently amended) [[A]] The pipe coupling assembly as in any one of claims 9-19 of claim 9, wherein [[the]] said slope of [[the]] said gripping member second surface in its rest state is [[some]] approximately 37 degrees [[, the]] and said slope of [[the]] said nut second surface is approximately [[some]] 45 degrees.

Claim 21. (Currently amended) [[A]] The pipe coupling assembly as in any one of claims 9-20 of claim 9, wherein said nut further includes an annular shoulder extending radially inwardly from the edge of said nut second surface, said stop adapted to be abutted by said gripping member when in its compressed state to thereby provide a resistive force for [[the]] said gripping member moving longitudinally out of [[the]] said body.

Claim 22. (Currently amended) [[A]] The pipe coupling assembly as in any one of claims 9-21 of claim 9, wherein the width of said nut second surface is greater than the width of [[the]] said gripping member second surface to thereby accommodate said gripping member second surface sliding alongside said nut second surface as [[the]] said nut is tightened whilst while full surface contact between [[the]] said two surfaces is maintained.

Claim 23. (Currently amended) [[A]] The pipe coupling assembly as in any one of claims 9-22 of claim 9, wherein [[the]] said width of said nut second surface is [[some]] approximately 1/3 greater than [[the]] said width of the gripping member second surface.